

Implementation

The adoption of this Comprehensive Plan is the first step in the implementation process. It is the product of considerable effort on the part of the City of Raleigh and its City Council, Planning Commission, Department of City Planning, as well as many other municipal departments, community leaders, and concerned citizens. Continuing action to implement the Plan will be needed for it to have lasting impact. Working with a range of implementation partners, the Department of City Planning will be the lead facilitator to implement the Plan and coordinate consistency reviews among municipal departments.

This Implementation Element describes how the policies and actions in the Comprehensive Plan should be carried out. It provides recommendations for administering the planning process and enhancing linkages between the Comprehensive Plan and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP); identifies actions to be considered during the update of the City's development regulations. It recommends steps to be taken to monitor, evaluate, and update the Plan on a regular basis. In the Action Plan section and the Action Plan Matrix, each of the Plan's action items is assigned to an agency and given a timeframe and priority ranking. Ties to the Capital Improvement Program are made explicit. All of the actions listed in the Action Plan Matrix are excerpted from the elements of the Plan and the reader is advised to consult the relevant element for more information and context.

The Comprehensive Plan is used to guide private and public development. The City uses the Plan to assess the appropriateness of proposed development cases including zoning actions, and special exceptions. All the Elements of the Comprehensive Plan are used to assess development applications, including both the narrative policies and applicable maps. The Plan is also used to assess the appropriateness of public development actions, proposed CIP items, and the siting of public facilities.

Zoning Regulations and Consistency

This section provides guidance on how the zoning regulations should be amended and updated after the Comprehensive Plan is adopted. Zoning is the primary tool for implementing the Comprehensive Plan's policies, particularly the Future Land Use Map. The zoning regulations themselves need substantial revision and reorganization, ranging from new definitions to updated development and design standards, and even new zoning districts. Therefore, the City plans to undertake a major overhaul of the zoning regulations beginning in 2009.

Policy IM 1.1

Consistency of the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code

Maintain consistency between the City's development regulations and the Comprehensive Plan, such that regulations facilitate, and do not inhibit, the implementation of Plan policies. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Action IM 1.1

Reserved

Action IM 1.2

Annual Review of Development Regulations

Annually review and update the City's regulations to account for any adopted Comprehensive Plan amendments, emerging issues, and market or real estate trends.

Relation to Capital Improvement Planning and Other City Plans

The City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is an important mechanism to implement public projects and infrastructure improvements. Public dollars will always be limited, so the City should balance its priorities with available revenues and other public funding sources. When updating its annual CIP, the City should consider the priorities that are listed within the Action Matrix.

The Comprehensive Plan is the city policy guide for issues related to the city's physical development. Raleigh's City Charter authorizes the Department of City Planning to prepare a comprehensive plan "for the purpose of over-all planning for the city rather than disintegrated and disassociated fragments." The City Charter also states that the comprehensive plan is intended to "assist several operating departments of the City in formulating a public policy which will treat the problems of the municipal government as a closely knit whole." All of the City's other plans for development, parks and open space, utilities, public services, and environmental preservation must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy IM 2.1

CIP Priorities

The Comprehensive Plan shall be consulted when establishing priorities within the City's Capital Improvement Program. (3)

Policy IM 2.2

Preeminence of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan shall be the city's lead and overall policy guide for the growth and development of Raleigh. All other city plans related to the City's growth and development and related infrastructure plans must be revised to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. (3, 4, 5)

Policy IM 2.3

Consistency of Other Plans

All City departments shall submit annually to the City Manager and Planning Director a list of plans and studies to be undertaken in the upcoming year, to determine joint planning opportunities and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. (3, 4)

Policy IM 2.4

Return on Investment

Major capital projects not tied to immediate life safety or capacity deficiencies should be subjected to a return on investment analysis as part of the prioritization process. The return on capital projects should be based on the ability of the project to catalyze private investment, make efficient ~~used~~use of existing infrastructure, and generate new net revenues.

Action IM 2.1

CIP Review Criteria

Refine the criteria used for the review of capital projects to be included in the CIP. Develop a methodology for estimating and including return on investment in the criteria.

Action IM 2.2

Revision of Other Plans

Review and update the City's plans, ~~including Redevelopment Plans,~~ to bring them into conformance with the policies of this adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Comprehensive Plan Updates and Amendments

This section addresses the process for monitoring, amending, and updating the Comprehensive Plan. It outlines the amendment process and recommended timeframe for amendment cycles as well as for the more extensive periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan every five years.

The City needs to be able to measure successes and challenges in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Department of City Planning should prepare an annual report to assess the progress of the City in implementing the Plan's recommendations and to set priorities for the coming year. This annual assessment should be used to guide City agency programs, capital improvement budgeting, and policy development to better achieve the goals of the Plan. It should be submitted to the City Manager, City Council, and the public. The Department of City Planning should make the progress report a highly publicized effort to demonstrate the important role the Comprehensive Plan plays in decisions that affect the City's growth and to continue the excellent public involvement process that helped develop the Comprehensive Plan.

~~To maintain the Plan's currency, the City should undertake a major re-evaluation and update of the Comprehensive Plan every five years. Such updates should include an update and revision of the Community Inventory report. This systematic update will allow the City to keep its data, policies, and actions relevant to changing times. However, this is not to infer that plan amendments should not take place otherwise.~~

The City should establish a yearly cycle for minor plan amendments to maintain its relevancy to the public and city government. The cycle should be timed to follow the annual progress assessment, so that lagging implementation items can be revisited. The yearly amendment process should provide an opportunity for individuals, groups, or city agencies to propose a minor amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to address changing social and market conditions or reflect new facility plans and work programs. Minor amendments may include changes to the text or maps of the Comprehensive Plan. Each proposed amendment will require the applicant to provide the burden of proof for the change or addition.

In addition to regular annual updates, to maintain the Plan's currency, the City should undertake periodic thematic updates of the Comprehensive Plan that take a deeper dive into specific topics of pressing concern. These updates should be undertaken every one to two years, and should address topics where the Plan needs more significant amendments to keep pace with a changing world. Examples could include responding to new transit plans and transportation technologies, adapting to a changing climate, structural changes in the local economy, or evolving dynamics in the housing market. A broad-based and authentic public participation process should accompany these periodic updates.

As part of the update process, the data compiled for the Community Inventory report has been reformatted into a streamlined document called the Raleigh Data Book. This resource should be kept up to date on an annual or biannual schedule to ensure that all future Plan updates can make use of the latest data and trend analysis.

Policy IM 3.1

Five-Year Updates

Update the Comprehensive Plan every ~~five~~one to two years to remain current and relevant, ~~with a particular focus~~focusing on the Plan's policy actions ~~a specific area of pressing concern, informed by a significant public engagement process.~~ (3, 6)

Policy IM 3.2

Annual Amendments

Amend the Comprehensive Plan on a yearly basis so the Plan may address changes in demography, economic markets, and public priorities. (1, 3, 6)

Policy IM 3.3

Internal Consistency

All amendments to the Comprehensive Plan shall be reviewed for consistency against adopted plan policies. Any policies, existing or proposed, found to be in conflict shall be revised or removed to achieve consistency. (3)

Policy IM 3.4

Amendment Criteria

Require the proponent of a Comprehensive Plan amendment to demonstrate its need and justification, as follows:

- Significant changes have occurred since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and necessitate the proposed amendment; Inconsistencies in land use or other plan policies exist in the adopted Comprehensive Plan that affect the City's efficient growth and development;
- The City's ability to achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan will be increased, or the operations of City government will be enhanced;
- The Comprehensive Plan's policies or actions inhibit the ability of the City to achieve other public policy objectives; Substantial improvement in the quality of life for City residents will be achieved; and
- Adoption of the proposed amendment is necessary to incorporate public policies established by the City government that are not reflected in the Comprehensive Plan. (3, 6)

Action IM 3.1

Reserved

Action IM 3.2

Annual Progress Report

Prepare and publish an annual easy-to-digest report on Comprehensive Plan progress including key accomplishments, critical issues, and key implementing agencies.

Action IM 3.3

Monitoring of Existing Conditions

Develop additional data collection and analysis tools for continuous monitoring of issues such as land use and development activity, vacant land and development capacity, and changes in quality (improvement or decline) of environmental and natural resources.

Action IM 3.4

Data Book Updates

Update the information in the Data Book every year.

Small Area Studies

To create a more predictable planning framework for the future, Raleigh has updated its planning procedures to replace Area Plans with area-specific planning studies. These studies will be undertaken as part of the Department of City Planning's work program for defined geographic areas that require more focused study and outreach, and will produce more detailed recommendations, than can be provided by the Comprehensive Plan. The intent of such studies is to guide long-range development; stabilize and improve neighborhoods, corridors, or other defined areas to achieve citywide goals; and attain economic and community benefits. These area-specific studies will be used, where appropriate, to develop amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map, and/or the Capital Improvement Plan. The studies may also generate strategic recommendations to be implemented outside of the Comprehensive Plan process. However, these area specific studies will not be adopted in toto as a part of the Comprehensive Plan. The following policies and actions provide guidance on how the City will allow and consider area-specific studies in the future.

Policy IM 4.1

Area Planning Studies

Prepare area-specific planning studies for parts of the City where detailed direction or standards are needed to guide land use, economic development, transportation, urban design, and other future physical planning and public investment decisions. The focus should be on areas or corridors that offer opportunities for revitalization or new residential, commercial, and mixed-use development and redevelopment, areas with challenges or characteristics requiring place-specific planning actions and public interventions, and areas designated "special study area" on the Future Land Use Map. (1, 3, 5)

Policy IM 4.2

Area Study Content and Intent

Ensure that area-specific planning studies take a form appropriate to the needs of the community and reflect citywide needs, as well as economic development policies and priorities, market conditions, implementation requirements, available staffing resources and time, and available funding. Such studies should address such topics as an existing conditions inventory, future land use recommendations, aesthetic and public space improvements, circulation improvements and transportation management, capital improvement requirements and financing strategies, the need for zoning changes or special zoning requirements, and other implementation techniques. If necessary, as a result of the findings of the area-specific plans, Comprehensive Plan amendments to the plan's text or maps should be introduced to ensure internal consistency for the areas involved. (3)

Policy IM 4.3

Existing Area Plans

As part of the update and re-examination process, remove existing, adopted Area Plans from the Comprehensive Plan as they become fully implemented, or if they are superseded by future area planning studies. (3, 6)

Action IM 4.1

Area Study Priorities

Undertake specific area studies for selected areas, starting with the areas highlighted in D.5 'Economic Development and Land Use' in Element D: 'Economic Development'.

Action IM 4.2

~~Area Studies and Comprehensive Plan Amendments~~

~~Amend the Comprehensive Plan according to the biannual amendment schedule to incorporate area and corridor study policies, land use recommendations, and zoning changes.~~

Reserved

Action IM 4.3

Area Studies and the CIP

Consider the capital improvement recommendations from area and corridor studies during the City's annual capital improvement planning process.

Action

Plan

This section of the Implementation Element includes an "Action Plan Matrix" that summarizes all actions in the Comprehensive Plan. All of the actions listed in the Matrix are excerpted from the Plan's Elements, and the reader is advised to consult the relevant chapter for more information and additional context for each action listed.

The Action Plan Matrix includes the responsible agency, the timeframe for implementation, level of priority, and whether actions will require capital funds for implementation. Relative to the timeframe designation, short-term actions should be completed within one to two years, mid-term actions should be completed within three to five years, long-term actions should be completed within five to ten years, and on-going actions should remain a constant priority of the City.

Responsibilities are assigned at the departmental level. Where multiple departments are specified, the first to be listed is the designated lead agency, with subsequently-listed departments in a supporting

role. Most actions involve multiple departments, in keeping with the intent to mobilize expertise across the City's organization to ensure the best achievable outcome for all undertakings.

Action Matrix

The Action Plan Matrix is maintained as a spreadsheet document for ease of maintenance. It is incorporated into this document by reference, and can be downloaded as a PDF at the website of the City of Raleigh Department of City Planning.

The following tables contain the key to all the terms and acronyms used in the action matrix.